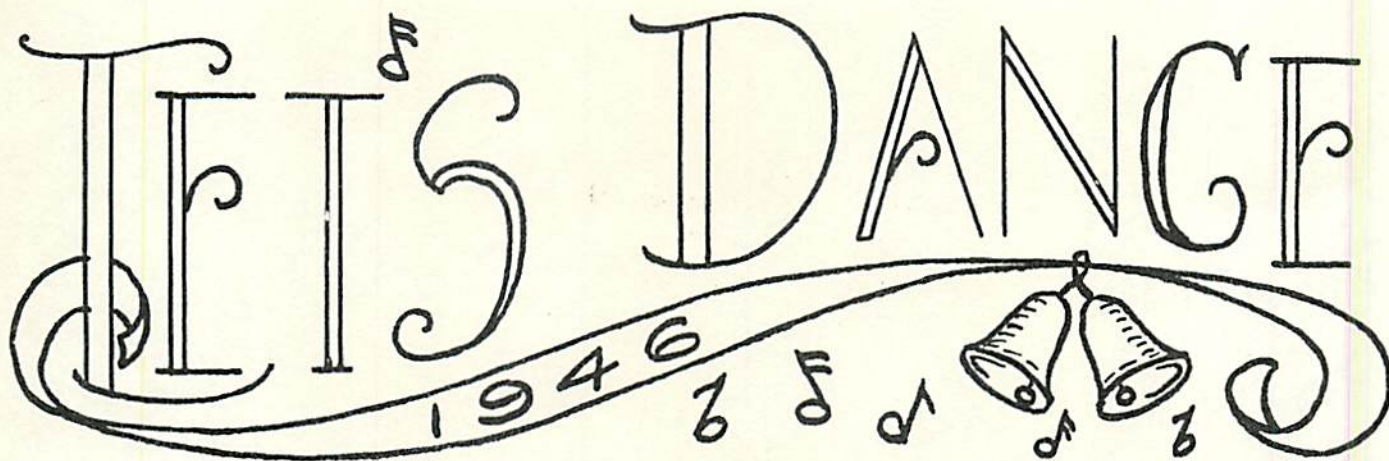


LET'S DANCE



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A NEW YEAR - - A NEW EDITOR AND STAFF

Our precocious 1946 baby just peeked over the typewriter keys. In frowning tones he said, "Get down to the bare facts (witness me) and sound forth the obituary of the old year and state my wardrobe for the new." Well, dressing down the "new babe" the facts are simple, salient, and salubrious. Old Man Time, in the guise of former Editor Ruby Biel and her staff, Business Manager Clode Evans, Artist Annemarie Steinbiss, and Co-editors Frances and Henry Glass, inherited a somewhat empty larder of provisions for the year 1945. Starting with low rations in December, 1944, 38 subscriptions, Editor Ruby Biel with the fine cooperation of reporters, followed the devious directions of Father Time to arrive at almost 500 subscriptions.

This third volume of our folk dance paper, "Let's Dance" shows the care it has received by its predecessors. From the enthusiasm and labors of past editors, Ed Kremers and Clarice Dechant, Bret Van Kriedt, and Ruby Biel, your new editor joyfully looks at the fullness and exuberance of Baby 1946 and says, "Let's go to press."

Your editor has a message, as good convention decrees. Succinctly, we want 1000 reporters throughout the world. We want our folk dance paper to reach the people who are part of the earthy scene. Tell us what Joe, Vasya, and Einar are doing. Be our eyes and ears in California, New York, Australia, and the world over. The story of people and their various meanderings in the folk arts and associated activities is couched in your language wherever you are. Keep us informed and we the new staff will pass the cultural wealth of mankind to the rest of our family of folk dancers.

Henry "Buzz" Glass, Editor

THESE FOLK DANCERS - - WHO ARE WE ANYHOW?

by

Clarice E. Dechant

Past President of the Folk Dance Federation of Calif.

They're short and tall, chubby and skinny, handsome and plain, dirndled and costumed. The questionnaire summarily said this when it included folk dancing in the title, but the ensuing information supplied by the 117 dancers at the festival had a great deal more to say. The folk dancers who volunteered this information were attending the October, 1945 festival of the Federation at Yacht Harbor, S. F. They individually offered material that is surprising and illustrative of their pursuit, folk dancing.

Facts and figures. Well, there were 31 married women, 30 single, 22 married men, 25 single, and 4 divorced.

Folk dancing "kid stuff"? Hardly, for the median age of the group as a whole shows age 34 for the men and 31 for the women. Average age is younger, being 32 for men and a little over 27 for the women. Because several women ran true to form and refused to state their ages, perhaps the average here is a little low.

What do these dancers do for a living? The old remark, "that if they are not kids they are school teachers" no longer holds true if the forty-five occupations listed are any criterion. Occupations with more than one representative include: clerks 8, engineers 6, teachers and professors 6, chemists 5, secretaries 5, carpenters 3, accountants 2, artists 2. Included were servicemen, housewives, and students. Most of the men are in the professions, while women have a majority of clerical jobs, with professions running second. Few semi-skilled or unskilled workers answered the questionnaire though many are known to be associated with various groups.

Have you heard people state that folk dancers are of foreign extraction? The survey shows that 85% of the men and 91% of the women are native born Americans from 26 states. Are the parents of foreign birth? Well, the figures show that over 50% of the parents are also American born, with Germany running second and Great Britain third.

Thirty-two nationalities were represented among the grandparents. It offers proof that intercultural appreciation is possible among people of diverse backgrounds; it provides evidence that people three and more generations removed from foreign culture are keeping alive delightful folk arts of our world neighbors.

Forty-one per cent of the dancers live in their own homes (43% men and 40% women). Rented houses come next in listing. The most unusual abode listed was on "a sailing schooner." Most of the respondents came to the Bay Area from some part of California (last home town.) Only eighteen other states and six foreign countries are mentioned as last home areas.

What about income levels? The results show that the reasonable cost of folk dancing as a hobby was probably not a factor in the lives of the participants. There was little difference in income during wartime and peacetime. Less than 1% of the men or women were reported in the poverty level (\$750-1500 a year). 21% of the men and 34% of the women earned incomes at the comfort level (\$1500-3000). At the luxury level (\$3000-5000) we find men only with 58% of them in this category. The largest number of men, then, fall into the luxury category and the largest number of employed women fall into the comfort category. (Categories are taken from the Kreps Scale in Social Education). Housewives and students were not listed as income earners.

Enthusiasm runs high for folk dancing. 71% of the men and more than 50% of the women dance more than once a week. One rugged soul claims seven nights a week??? 70% of the men and 62% of the women attend festivals regularly every month. Distance seems to be the only factor mentioned as keeping the non-attenders away. (What will new autos and helicopters do--the Oakland Auditorium proved too small!)

How long does interest in folk dancing last? From 1 month to 25 years according to our informants. Only 16 (14%) had danced less than one year, and 13 (11%) had danced more than 5. The median length of time was two and a half years for men and 2 years for women. Possibly the inception of the Federation three and a half years ago had something to do with the attraction of participants.

The initiation into folk dancing seems to have been most commonly encouraged by the "word of mouth method." The presentation of exhibition dances, public demonstrations, and festivals are prominent in inducing people to join the merry throng, while the influence of the printed advertisement seemed negligible. (The moving pictures, daily papers via photographs and magazine articles no doubt are inducements--editor's note.)

In response to the query: "Why do you folk dance?" most of the people declared the "joy of dancing" as their primary reason (95). Factors, as learning special techniques and interpretations, were subordinate to the feeling of "sheer joy." Recreation and meeting new people were popular reasons for second choice. Interestingly, there were few who admitted that participation in exhibition dancing was a choice at all!

Co-hobbies and leisure time pursuits were as diversified as the occupations and other backgrounds of the dancers. Second to folk dancing, the largest number were interested in outdoor activities (picnics, hikes, outings), and music appreciation (light classics and symphony). Active sports and ballroom dancing came next with winter sports fifth. Without exception, all 117 dancers confirmed their desire to continue folk dancing.

In reviewing the compiled facts and statistics, one may ask, "What assistance can be found in this kind of study for folk dance clubs and the Federation?" A few follow:

1. That folk dancing affairs are best attended if within reasonable distance of home towns.
2. Beginners grow into the facets of folk dancing over a period of time. The most active folk dance hobbyist had been dancing 3 years.
3. The age range is predominantly between 20 and 40.
4. A major way of arousing enthusiasm is by personal invitation.
5. Married and single people alike can enjoy the activity together.
6. Folk dancing does not draw solely from any occupational, income, or ethnic group. American born people can and do appreciate cultural contributions of other ethnic and national groups.

(Note: A copy of the entire official report, complete with graphs and statistics, is in the hands of the Federation Council for those who wish a more intimate perusal of the report. A similar review of this survey will be published in the Journal of Education Sociology and also in Recreation.)

DECEMBER FESTIVAL

The December festival of the Folk Dance Federation of California presented an outstanding program Sunday, December 9 from 1 to 5 p.m. in the Oakland Civic Auditorium under the sponsorship of the Berkeley Folk Dancers. A record crowd of 800 dancers and an audience of 5000 regaled in this Christmas festival. With fine attention to details and organization shown by the Berkeley Folk Dancers the day was a complete success.

The beautiful hand painted programs in the guise of a Polish dancer paralleled by a larger mounted figure on the stage were unique in context and design.

During the afternoon three delightful exhibitions were presented. The "Kujawiak" by the Festival Workshop, the "Tuljaka" by the Palomanians, and the "Krakowisk" by the Berkeley Folk Dancers. The respective directors, Madelynne Greene, Roy Zellick, and Eleanor Wakefield were well applauded by the audience.

Using the facilities of some 15 restaurants, folk dancers enjoyed conversation with food during the dinner hour. At 7:30 p.m. the Berkeley group with the Federation dancers as guests continued activities with a Christmas party at the German House. Dancing, stunts, exhibitions, and Christmas carols were enjoyed.

Responsible for the success of the day's program were: Afternoon Chairman, Dave Boyce; Evening Chairman, Larry Getchell; Decorations, George Jelton; Dinner, Bee Catterlin; Arrangement, John Bittman; Programs, Ginni DeLong, Gilman Merrill, Helen Getchell, Louise Boyce, and Ruth Ruby.

JANUARY FESTIVAL

The Glen Park Folk Dancers will be hosts to the Federation at the first festival of the New Year, scheduled for Sunday, January 20, 1946. The festival will be held at the Glen Park Recreation Center in Glen Park, S.F. Directions have been issued to all groups regarding transportation facilities and exact directions by auto. The San Francisco Recreation Department requests that you wear soft soled shoes, tennis shoes, or dancing slippers, if possible.

DANCE SERIES AT THE SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF ART

An outstanding series of dance programs entitled "Dance in Our Society" is being presented at the San Francisco Museum of Art on five Wednesday evenings, beginning January 9, 1946. Sponsored by the San Francisco Dance League in cooperation with the Museum, these events will delineate the nature and function of dancing in the community. The schedule is as follows:

January 9	The Neuro-Psychiatrist Looks at the Dance
January 16	Folk Dance Today
January 23	Materials of Dance
January 30	Communication in Dance
February 6	Blueprint for a Civic Theatre

On January 16, a variety of folk dances will be presented by some of the Federation folk dancing groups, ranging from the Mexican Indian Dance Matiaschenes to a group of jitterbug dancers. Following the exhibitions a panel discussion on folk dancing will be presented by the following: Miss Lucile Czarnowski, chairman, Harmer Davis, Clarice Dechent, Henry Glass, Madelynne Greene, Mrs. Eleanor Wakefield.

LET'S DANCE AND VOLUME I

Volume I. The Folk Dance Federation of California's Volume 8 of dance descriptions "Folk Dances From Near and Far" is still being offered for sale. Only a limited number of copies are on hand. Subscribers to the paper may receive the book for \$1.50, and non-subscribers for \$2.00. Mail orders to Mrs. Frances Glass, 1924 102nd Avenue, Oakland 3, California.

Let's Dance. Subscriptions for the paper should be mailed to the new Business Manager, Bill Ballou, 857 Third Avenue, San Bruno, California. The subscription price is the same--\$1.75 per year. NOTE: Old subscribers should renew their subscriptions immediately upon expiration to insure receiving all issues of Let's Dance.

PLEASE MAIL ORDERS FOR VOLUME I AND SUBSCRIPTION ORDERS TO THE CORRECT AGENT.

BY THE WAY

by
"Buzz" Glass

We were surprised to learn that Harmer Davis, member of the Federation Research Committee, had served as a member of the Columbia Fire Department. Recently, Columbia was made a California State Park in view of its place in early California history. Columbia is located in the Mother Lode country of Calaveras County, at one time considered as a site for the State Capitol. Every year in connection with the Frog Jumping Jubilee at Angels Camp, a contest is held between the firemen of Columbia and Angels Camp. According to Engineer Davis, the preliminaries to the festivities of the contest leave many of the participants somewhat lacking in direct punch to man the wagon (they're not only on the wagon, but beneath it.) On one such occasion, Davis was pressed into service on the Columbia team. Davis goes on to recount how his side gave their all to work up their pressure and were on the point of surpassing the home team when the hose gave way.

Speaking of the Mother Lode country reminds us of the gold still in "them thar hills." If you would like to see as good a living picture of early California as possible hie yourself to such places as San Andreas, Mokelumne Hill, and Columbia. We further suggest that you combine this outing with a little gold panning. With a miner's pan or shallow basin, a knife, trowel, and bottle, you can still glean the gold stuff. At least you can imagine finding that illusive nugget.

The young lady in one of our local record shops happens to be a student of Latin America. In a recent trip to Mexico, she discovered that along with the publicized popularity of La Bamba (recent issue of Life) a dance from Vera Cruz, the Mexican Nite Spots are doing La Raspa. La Raspa, a simple Spanish American Colonial dance, is indigenous with New Mexico. (Description published by Research Committee and also danced in some of our local groups.)

By the way, the mystery of Dottie Frost's Hungarian braid hair-do was solved in our last after the festival Hopak. No, the thing wasn't hers after all. The hair was her aunt's--and the gal dissected a pin-cushion to get it. The ingenuity of some people!

TULARE FOLK DANCERS by Florence Rata.

The Tulare Folk Dancers danced Swedish folk dances for the Visalia Women's Club at their Smorgasbord December 12. December 15 is the date for the big Christmas party, with many bay area dancers planning to attend as well as many from neighboring cities. Another exhibition will be given by members when they dance a Portuguese dance for the combined citizenship class at the Tulare High School December 19. John Ethridge will head the new folk dance group now being organized in Porterville. John, Winifred Gunther, and Florence Rata attended their first festival December 9 in the Civic Auditorium and were impressed by the large number of dancers present, and the beautiful costumes worn.

ALBANY FOLK DANCERS by Mrs. Wilhelminia Nelson

Mrs. Wilhelminia Nelson is the new secretary for this group, elected to replace Josephine Herbert who resigned. Josephine is now Mrs. Thomas Pettit and is going East to make her home. Folk dancers gathered on October 27 at the Albany high gymnasium for a delightful party complete with Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy, and refreshments of cider and doughnuts. The beginning class of the Albany Folk Dancers now meets Tuesday in the Cornell School instead of Monday. The advanced group continues on Wednesday as usual at the Marin School.

PETALUMA INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING CLUB by Jeannette Lyle

Our club is still in its infancy but we feel we are slowly growing. We presented a half-hour program to a group of the American Associated College Women in Santa Rosa early in December, and felt very gratified with the enthusiasm with which our program was received. We quoted the 1st and 2nd Articles of the Federation By-Laws to this group to inform them why we did folk dancing, and we hope by these contacts to interest more people in this popular recreation.

SACRAMENTO FOLK DANCERS by Otto Rhoades

Two projects are underway in this group: to build up a club record collection, and to build up an equipment fund for a loud speaker, etc. Members are encouraged to contribute a record of their favorite dance, and dance committees are furnishing refreshments without club assistance so that nearly all membership fees can be put into the equipment fund. When present officers took over in September a two-page questionnaire asking member's preferences in dances and refreshments helped the officers to plan a program in accordance with members' wishes.

OAKLAND FOLK DANCERS by Betty Pearson

New officers for this fast growing club are: Fred Johnson, President; John Dennis, Vice-President, and Violet Stewart, Secretary-Treasurer, and Federation representatives, Betty Pearson and Fred Barnes. Harold Pearson, the outgoing president, re-organized the club a year ago, and the membership has continued to grow under his capable leadership. Lt. Ed Kremers and Walter Grothe have been acting as instructors for the group.

PALOMANIANS

The Palomanians were guests of the Docey-do Club on December 8 at a delightful party that was highlighted by two huge cakes in celebration of Al and Rosanna DePalma's wedding anniversary. Al and Rosanna are members of both groups. The third Saturday of every month is party night, and invitations are extended at times to different groups to attend and mix in good fellowship. The November party was highlighted by a midnight venison feed. The venison was furnished by one of the Palomanians who was a lucky hunter.

GATE SWINGERS by Barbara Miller

The Thursday night beginner's group under the direction of Eileen Wade held a pre-Christmas party December 13. A new beginner's class will start the first Thursday in January in the gym of the Central YMCA, San Francisco. This group has adopted a policy of accepting for membership all discharged servicemen whose wives are members. Recently Sadie Hawkins day returned with Vera Holleuffer as the original Sadie Hawkins and LaVerne Muchmore was Moonbeam McSwain. The girls asked the boys for the dances, and games and refreshments helped make the party a great success. The Executive Council recently met at Dan McDonald's home and were not quite sure whether it was an Executive Council meeting or a banquet when Dan served a delicious Mexican dinner with all the trimmings! Three former Gate Swingers are now back from Army service: Bob Christensen, Albert Krause, and Lamy Yoeman. Kay Holmes, during the Christmas season, directed a choral group made up of members, and on Mondays between 7 and 8 p.m. sang Christmas carols at the YMCA. The Gate Swingers will hold open house for all folk dancers at their New Year's party, and if you have attended one of these parties in the past you know how much fun they are!

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In pattern it is somewhat reminiscent of the Swedish Bleking. Our voyageur likewise tells us that the Corrido, a bullfight dance, is likewise popular all over Mexico. We have watched the local Mexican colony in Oakland do the dance and find it a simple and colorful one.

One of the dancers of the Palomarians recently obtained a copy of the music and instructions for the Chilean Dance El Pericon. A translation of this dance is being made. The addition of this dance should enrich the repertoire of our dancers.

Recently, local papers described a national article re the relative merits of New York and San Francisco rats. Both locals attributed the most superlative qualities to their local species. However, an incident in the California Folklore Quarterly gives a Colorado mining town a show place. In an article describing the Cornish Miners in Colorado, a Cornish miner describes an eerie incident of seeing a large rat with a candle in its mouth running up a shaft followed by four little rats. Well, it's rattling good fun.

Having accomplished their primary project of describing the popular dances of the Federation, the Research Committee contemplates some future sleuthing that should bring rich and interesting results. Recently some of the members of the committee spent a Sunday afternoon with the Portuguese Colony in East Oakland. For three solid hours, or three frozen hours, said investigators like the three monkeys were oblivious to the speeches voiced in Portuguese. Following the meeting the hot coffee served thawed the members sufficiently to enable them to join in the National Portuguese dance, the Chamarrita. The music for the dancing was furnished by five guitars and mandolins. Good naturedly, the visitors were pushed through the figures of the dance and complimented on doing so well. Interestingly, our Portuguese friend, Mrs. Pinto, told us that the mournful ballad sung by the elderly lady was called a "fado". Seemingly these ballads are added to by individuals and often made up as the singer follows the chording of the guitar. The melancholy yet nasal quality of the song, coupled with the sincerity of the singer held the audience. We learned from Mr. A. J. Silva, one of the officers of the Portuguese Civic Club, that there are 25,000 people of Portuguese descent in the Bay Region alone.

Walter Grothe sent us this item. AAt the December festival I noticed a sailor, watching very intently all that was going on. I talked to him and he said he was just fascinated. He had just returned from three years in the Pacific and happened to be strolling by the lake when he noticed the folk dance sign and walked in. He said he had never seen so many people having such a genuinely good time together."

YOUR CLUB AND MINE

VALLEJO FOLK DANCERS by Sue Lemmon

The new officers for the group are: Lloyd Nass, President; Harry Wessenberg, Vice-President; and Audrey Null, Secretary-Treasurer. The group recently gave an exhibition at the Vallejo Women's Club. After an exhibition of squares and Scandinavian dances, the audience was instructed in a few simple circle dances, and it was hard to tell who had the most fun--dancers or audience. Harry Wessenberg and wife, instructors for the group, recently welcomed their second daughter, Jansi. The first Tuesday of each month has been designated as party night, and features special refreshments and costumes. All are invited to attend.

GARFIELD FOLK DANCERS

This group has plans underway for the February festival to be held in Berkeley. Officers for the club will be elected at a business meeting to be held December 18. At present the Tuesday night group is a combination intermediate and advanced group and are busy learning the Neapolitan Tarantella.

BERKELEY FOLK DANCERS by Walter Grothe

The 1946 officers for this club are: Clarence Crooks, President; Sam Bell Wakefield, Vice-president; Carol Melbin, Treasurer; and Lois Rodecape, Secretary. During November Madelynne Greene gave the group a course (4 evenings) in teaching techniques, which was very well attended and very successful. Walter Grothe during December will give a 3 evening course to teach members new dances which have been introduced at the festivals, including the Neapolitan Tarantella, Russian Peasant Dance, Jesucita, and Kolos. Berkeley has about 300 active members at present. The group announces that the Willard School dance nights will be discontinued, but that the John Hinkel schedule will be continued in full. Berkeley is providing the weekly troupe for the Oak Knoll Naval Hospital on Wednesday evenings and December 12 will be the last evening until after the holidays.

FESTIVAL WORKSHOP by Walter Grothe

As the exhibition Kujawiak was so well received at the December festival, Madelynne Greene would like to teach a simplified ballroom version of this dance at some festival in the near future.

SAN JOSE POLKATEERS by Dorothy Frost

The Polkateers are about to claim a record for giving exhibition performances. In recent weeks they have danced for the 70th anniversary of the Santa Clara County Odd Fellows, the White Shrine, the Eastern Star, and the Masonic Home at Decoto. They played hosts to the folk dancers of Agnew, Gilroy, and San Jose's evening school at a Thanksgiving party, and are planning to hold an even better Christmas shindig. They are also planning to folk dance 'til dawn on New Year's eve!